



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Aging and Adult Services

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(919) 733-3983

April 14, 2005

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Attention: Adult Services Supervisors and Managers

SUBJECT: Field Test of Adult Protective Services Tools

BACKGROUND

The Division of Aging and Adult Services, in partnership with the Adult Protective Services Task Force, is pleased to announce the development of several new tools and revisions to current tools for use in Adult Protective Services (APS) in county departments of social services. As you may recall, the APS Task Force has taken a multi-faceted approach to strengthening our APS program, including legislative and policy recommendations, improving community relations, proposing workload/caseload standards and required training, and developing best practice tools.

In order to assess the impact of these new and revised tools in the areas of social work practice, case documentation, and time standards, we are conducting a three month field test. This letter is an invitation for DSSs to participate. We would like to have at least three DSSs from each county level participate in the pilot, so that we can evaluate the impact of the tools based on county size. However, we are not limiting the number of counties that decide to participate and plan to accommodate all DSSs interested in piloting the tools.

TOOLS TO BE PILOTTED

The new and revised tools are based on current APS law and policy and have been developed and/or revised through the work of the APS Task Force and its regional workgroups. A total of 55 DSSs have participated on either the APS Task Force and/or its regional work groups in developing/revising these tools. Additionally, we evaluated tools used in other states for potential use in North Carolina and conducted a community stakeholder survey to seek input on how to strengthen the tools we currently use in the APS program. The tools to be field tested are listed below.

Notice to Reporter-Screened In
Notice to Reporter-Screened Out
APS Intake and Instructions
APS Community Evaluation and Instructions
APS Facility Evaluation
Diligent Efforts to Locate Adult
Capacity Decision for Substantiated APS Reports
Written Report of APS Evaluation
Initial Notice to District Attorney and/or Law Enforcement
Notice to Reporter-Completion of Evaluation
APS Protection Plan
APS Quarterly Review

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The tools were developed and/or revised in an effort to strengthen the APS process. They are designed to build upon each other to the fullest extent possible. In order to participate in the field test, we are asking DSSs to use all of the tools listed above as a set. This will help us determine how well these tools work together. Current tools that have not been changed should continue to be used while the new and/or revised tools are being tested.

In addition to field testing all of the tools, DSSs are asked to provide written feedback on the tools at the conclusion of the field test. It will be very important to have your feedback documented as we evaluate the results of the field test and modify any of the tools based on your experience with them. The field test summary feedback materials are included in this letter.

All of the new and/or revised APS tools are available as Microsoft Word template files. They can be used as electronic tools or in pen and paper (hard copy) format. Copies of the tools are attached as separate documents.

TIMELINE AND ACTIVITIES

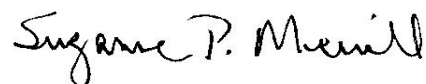
DSSs participating in the field test will receive training and/or technical assistance from the Adult Programs Representatives. A number of DSSs participated in the development and/or revision of the tools and are familiar with them. Those DSSs may opt to begin field testing the tools right away. For those DSSs unfamiliar with the tools, cluster meetings are planned to provide staff with an orientation to the tools. The cluster meetings will be held in May and June 2005. Once we have determined the DSSs participating in the field test and those interested in attending a cluster meeting, we will arrange locations to accommodate efficient travel for staff.

The field test will be conducted July 1 through September 30, 2005. DSSs are asked to submit written feedback on the tools by October 17. We plan to modify the tools based on the results of the field test and have the tools ready for statewide use by December 2005.

If your county is interested in participating in the field test, please notify me or your Adult Programs Representative by May 1, 2005. Also, please let us know if you would like to attend a cluster meeting.

If you have any questions about the field test or the tools, please contact your Adult Programs Representative. We are excited about this next step in our work to strengthen APS in North Carolina and look forward to our continued partnership with you in this effort.

Sincerely,



Suzanne P. Merrill, Chief
Adult Services Section

/spm

Attachments

AFS-04-2005

Field Test of APS Tools

Instructions for Summary Feedback

An essential component of field-testing these proposed tools is obtaining feedback from APS social workers and APS supervisors. Feedback is needed regarding how useful and thorough the tools are; the amount of time required to complete the tools; and their overall effectiveness in assisting you with the provision of adult protective services.

The Intake tool, the Community Evaluation tool, and the Facility Evaluation tool are significantly different from those we currently use. Feedback from the field test will guide further revisions to these tools. The Diligent Effort to Locate Adult, Capacity Decision for Substantiated APS Reports, and Notices to Reporter on Screened In and Out reports are new tools. The APS Protection Plan and APS Quarterly Review tools are revisions of the Service Plan and Quarterly Review forms currently in use. The proposed new tools are designed to focus attention on unique features of APS. There are minor revisions to the other tools included in the field test.

In developing these tools, the APS Task Force and its regional work groups have taken the approach that quality practice should be reflected in both the level of service provided and the associated documentation of APS activities. While some of these are longer versions of existing tools, and others are new tools, the expectation is for these new/revised tools to capture documentation that is currently done in narrative format or other means. Some other items were added to the tools to incorporate findings from record reviews indicating the need for additional documentation.

At the end of the field test, social workers should complete a summary feedback sheet for any of the tools used during the field test. While feedback from APS social workers is critical, we also request that APS supervisors/managers provide feedback to us by completing a Summary Feedback Sheet on all of the tools. This will provide additional information from an agency perspective.

There is a separate feedback sheet for the Intake tool and the Evaluation tool. Given the importance of these two tools to the APS process, we want to gather this feedback separately from the other tools. The feedback for the remainder of the tools is captured on one sheet with a separate entry for each tool. Each feedback sheet is designed to capture both social worker and supervisor/manager comments.

The feedback sheets are Microsoft Word template files and may be typed or handwritten. Typed sheets will automatically wrap to subsequent pages if additional space is needed for comments. For handwritten feedback, please use additional sheets as needed.

At the top of each feedback sheet, please indicate the county name and whether the person completing the feedback sheet is a social worker or a supervisor/manager. It is important to have the county name indicated so we will have feedback on the tools from various size DSSs. Also, on the Summary Feedback for Evaluation Tool, please indicate whether the feedback is for the Community or Facility Evaluation Tool.

It is not necessary to compile your feedback prior to sending it to us. We will compile the individual county information into aggregate feedback to be shared with the APS Task Force. **Please submit your feedback sheets by October 17th.**

Feedback sheets may be e-mailed to Kathy Schindler in the Adult Services Section of the Division of Aging and Adult Services at Kathy.Schindler@ncmail.net. You may also mail the feedback sheets to the address below.

Kathy Schindler
Division of Aging and Adult Services
Adult Services Section
2101 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2101

Please contact your Adult Programs Representative if you need assistance in completing the summary feedback sheets. Thank you for participating in the field test and your willingness to provide valuable feedback on the tools.

Field Test of APS Tools Summary Feedback for Intake Tool

County: _____

_____, Social Worker

_____, Supervisor/Manager

Please rate the overall effectiveness of this Intake tool in relation to the tool you/your staff are currently using. ☐ More effective ☐ About the same ☐ Less effective (select your response).

Explain:

Does this tool enable you/your staff to do a more complete and thorough intake?

Explain:

Did using this tool enable you/your staff to improve upon and better support your screening decision?

Explain:

Is there enough detail for all areas of intake?

Explain:

Are there any changes/additions you would suggest for this tool? Please be specific.

Field Test of APS Tools
Summary Feedback for Evaluation Tool

County: _____

_____, Social Worker

_____, Supervisor/Manager

_____ **Community Evaluation Tool**

_____ **Facility Evaluation Tool**

Please rate the overall effectiveness of this Evaluation tool in relation to the tool you/your staff are currently using: ☐ More effective ☐ About the same ☐ Less effective
(select your response).

Explain:

Does this tool enable you/your staff to conduct a more complete and thorough evaluation?

Explain:

Did using this tool enable you/your staff to make a case decision with greater confidence, and to better support the case decision?

Explain:

Is there adequate detail for all areas of the evaluation?

Explain:

Are there any changes/additions you would suggest for this tool? Please be specific.

Field Test of APS Tools Summary Feedback for Other Tools

County: _____

_____, Social Worker

_____, Supervisor/Manager

Please use the following scale to rate the tools listed below. Please select your response.

3-Very useful; better than current method

2-Somewhat useful; about the same as what is currently being used

1-Not useful; current tools/method better

Capacity Decision for Substantiated APS Reports: ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1

Comments:

Diligent Efforts to Locate Adult: ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1

Comments:

APS Protection Plan: ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1

Comments:

APS Quarterly Review: ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1

Comments:

Notice to Reporter – Screened In: ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1

Comments:

Notice to Reporter – Screened Out: ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
Comments

Initial Notice to District Attorney and/or Law Enforcement: ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
Comments:

Written Report of APS Evaluation: ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
Comments